

Amendments to the Claims:

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of managing reliance in an electronic transaction system, the method comprising ~~the steps of:~~
  - ~~(A) a certification authority issuing electronic signals representing a primary certificate to a subscriber;~~
  - ~~(B) forwarding, from the certification authority to a reliance server, electronic signals representing information about the issued primary certificate;~~
  - ~~(C) the reliance server maintaining the forwarded information about issued primary certificate;~~
  - ~~(D) the subscriber forming a transaction and then providing electronic signals representing the transaction to a relying party, the transaction including electronic signals representing the primary certificate;~~
  - (E) obtaining electronic signals representing subscriber assurance of an attribute of a subscriber to the system, the subscriber assurance issued by a certification authority;  
obtaining the relying party sending to the reliance server electronic signals representing a request for transactional assurance based on a the transaction involving ~~received from~~ the subscriber;
  - ~~(F) the reliance server determining whether to provide the requested transactional assurance, said determining based on at least the information about the issued primary certificate and on the subscriber requested assurance; and, depending based on the said determining,~~
  - ~~(G) issuing the reliance server issuing to the relying party electronic signals representing transactional assurance a secondary certificate providing the assurance to a the relying party.~~

2. – 56. (Cancelled)

57. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein the subscriber assurance comprises (a) an identification assurance of the identity of the subscriber, or (b) an

authorization assurance of authorization of the subscriber, or (c) both (a) and (b).

58. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein the subscriber assurance comprises electronic signals representing a certificate.

59. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein the determining is based also on information provided by the relying party.

60. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein the request for transactional assurance comes from the relying party.

61. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein the request for transactional assurance includes a request for a guarantee of an aspect of the transaction and comprising:  
validating information in the request for transaction assurance to determine whether to provide the guarantee for the aspect of the transaction; and  
sending electronic signals representing an indication of whether the aspect of the transaction will be guaranteed.

62. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein the electronic signals representing the subscriber assurance comprise electronic signals representing a time-based certificate specifying a stated reliance limit and the method comprises obtaining electronic signals representing an actual reliance limit for the certificate, the actual reliance limit being different from the stated reliance limit.

63. (New) A computer program product comprising instructions for causing a computer to effect a method of managing reliance in an electronic transaction system, the method comprising:  
receiving electronic signals representing a transaction associated with a subscriber, the transaction including information regarding at least one attribute of that subscriber;  
creating a reliance request message specifying at least one aspect of the transaction upon which a relying party intends to rely; and  
causing electronic signals representing the reliance request message to be sent to a reliance server requesting a transactional assurance for the aspect of the transaction upon

which the relying party intends to rely.

64. (New) The computer program product of claim 63, wherein the method further comprises:

receiving electronic signals representing a transactional assurance from the reliance server; and

continuing the transaction with the subscriber based on information in the transactional assurance.

65. (New) The computer program product of claim 63, wherein the electronic signals representing the transactional assurance are received in response to the sending of the reliance request message.

66. (New) The computer program product of claim 63, wherein the subscriber assurance comprises (a) an identification assurance of the identity of the subscriber, or (b) an authorization assurance of authorization of the subscriber, or (c) both (a) and (b).

67. (New) The computer program product of claim 63, wherein the reliance request message comes from the relying party.

68. (New) A computer program product comprising instructions for causing a computer to effect a method of managing reliance in an electronic transaction system, the method comprising:

receiving electronic signals representing a reliance request message, the message specifying an aspect of a transaction with a subscriber upon which a relying party intends to rely and requesting assurance for the aspect of the transaction;

determining whether to provide transactional assurance based on the reliance request message; and

generating electronic signals representing an indication of whether transactional assurance is available.

69. (New) The computer program product of claim 68, the method further comprising:

receiving electronic signals representing the transactional assurance; and  
continuing the transaction based on information in the transactional assurance.

70. (New) The computer program product of claim 68, wherein the subscriber assurance comprises (a) an identification assurance of the identity of the subscriber, or (b) an authorization assurance of authorization of the subscriber, or (c) both (a) and (b).

71. (New) The computer program product of claim 68, wherein the reliance request message comes from the relying party.

72. (New) The computer program product of claim 68, wherein the reliance request message includes certificate information derived from the transaction.

73. (New) The computer program product of claim 68, wherein the determining whether to provide the transactional assurance further comprises determining the status of a certificate associated with the transaction.

74. (New) The computer program product of claim 68, wherein the reliance request message includes a request for a guarantee of an aspect of the transaction and the method comprises:

validating information in the reliance request message to determine whether to provide the guarantee for the aspect of the transaction; and

sending electronic signals representing an indication of whether the aspect of the transaction will be guaranteed.

75. (New) The computer program product of claim 68, wherein the electronic signals representing the subscriber assurance comprise electronic signals representing a time-based certificate specifying a stated reliance limit and the method comprises obtaining electronic signals representing an actual reliance limit for the certificate, the actual reliance limit being different from the stated reliance limit.